



Early Days (UK) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY216300
Inspection date	03 July 2006
Inspector	Ann Lee
Setting Address	Early Days UK, 7-15 Linacre Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L21 8NJ
Telephone number	0151 928 1551
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Registered person	Early Days (UK) Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Early Days Nursery is one of three nurseries which are owned by the registered person. It opened in 2002 and operates from four playrooms in a purpose built building. All children share access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is situated in Litherland, Liverpool and a maximum of 42 children may attend at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08.00 until 18.00 all year round.

There are currently 70 children aged from birth to four years old on-roll. Of these, 19

children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs 13 members of staff who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where staff take steps to keep them free from infection and cross contamination. There are staff cleaning rotas in place and work surfaces are cleaned regularly using antibacterial spray. Staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies and children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. All bed sheets, bibs and flannels are washed daily to prevent cross contamination, and toys in the baby room are washed regularly to ensure that they are hygienic. However, some of the large role play equipment and soft bodied dolls in the pre-school room are not sufficiently clean and these may pose a health risk to children.

Staff protect children in the event of accident or illness because there is always one member of staff on duty who has completed an appropriate first aid course and the first aid box is kept fully stocked. All of the necessary documentation is in place, such as accident and medication records, and parental permission for emergency treatment. Children are protected from the effects of the sun because staff apply sun cream before they go outside, monitor their exposure and bring them inside when it becomes too hot.

A cook is employed who devises a varied menu consisting of a mixture of freshly cooked and processed foods, which meet children's individual needs and provides them with a balanced diet. Drinks are offered regularly to prevent children from becoming dehydrated.

There are many opportunities for children to develop their physical skills because they play outside on wheeled toys, kick balls and climb on the large climbing frame. They also enjoy digging in the sand and running about in the fresh air. Indoors children dance to music and practice their small motor skills as they manipulate shape sorters, puzzles and dough, paint, build using different types of construction materials and make models. Staff help young children to walk as they hold their hands and provide toys to support them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright and airy nursery where they have sufficient space to move about freely and explore their environment. Each playroom leads directly into the outside play area through patio doors so that at certain times of the day children can choose whether to play indoors or outside. This helps them to become confident

and independent. Their independence is further promoted because they can access the toilets by themselves.

Toys and equipment are displayed on low level shelving, on tables and in boxes within easy reach of children so that they can choose their own activities.

The premises are safe for children as there are many features in place, such as safety gates, socket covers, radiator covers and finger guards on the doors, which help to minimise the risk of accidental injury. Basic risk assessments are in place and staff check the premises for hazards before the children arrive each day. Security is good because there is an intercom system in place to monitor visitors to the nursery and they must sign the visitors book on arrival and departure.

Children learn about fire safety because they practice the fire evacuation procedure regularly. Staff also help children to learn how to keep themselves safe on outings because they talk to them about road safety and devise activities to reinforce this message. Children make models of traffic lights and zebra crossings and then use them to practice crossing the road safely.

Staff have an understanding of child protection and know their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. All of the necessary information and emergency contact numbers are available so that staff can seek help and advice if they are concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel comfortable and at ease in the setting because the staff are friendly and approachable, and they develop close affectionate relationships with them. Babies are picked up and cuddled, and staff are quick to comfort them when they become upset or bored. Staff spend time talking to babies, holding them, showing them pictures and photographs on the walls and singing rhymes. Children enjoy messy play each day, such as finger painting and sand and water play. The babies and toddlers enjoy looking at books and playing with a suitable range of toys and equipment, such as shape sorters, puzzles, dolls and musical instruments.

Staff have accessed training in the Birth to three matters framework, and they have begun to use the framework to help them to devise a suitable programme of activities, which help children to have fun and to make progress in all areas of development. The playroom is organised to allow children free access to a good range of toys and equipment and children confidently move around the play areas and choose their own activities, such as construction, painting, sand and water play and dough. However, some areas in the pre-school room, such as the home corner, are not arranged attractively to entice children to play. For example, the dolls and play-food are in drawers and on shelves, rather than set out in the kitchen. Staff observe the children and they are beginning to use these observations to plan activities, which meet children's individual needs.

Children are friendly, independent and confident. The older children can access the

toilet by themselves and they confidently talk to each other and to adults, ask questions and explain what they are doing. They play well together and show good levels of concentration and cooperation when playing with the small world toys, dough and sand and water.

Children can play outdoors most days and the door is sometimes left open so that they can choose where to play and have plenty of space to move around and explore. There is a good variety of outdoor play equipment so that children can climb, slide, play football and ride bikes.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have received training in the Foundation Stage curriculum and are receiving help and advice from the early years teacher advisor. This is reflected in the recent improvements to the space and resources provided. Children have free access to a wide range of activities, which are set out in different areas. For example, there is an attractive book corner where children can sit on comfortable cushions to rest, look at books and listen to stories. Other areas offer different types of play, such as role play, construction, sand and water and painting.

Funded three and four-year-old children share their playroom with two-year-olds, and the staff do not always differentiate between the two groups to ensure that older children are given sufficient challenge and can develop at their own pace. For example, although children have lots of choice about what they do, this can mean that they do not take part in structured activities, such as story time or arts and crafts.

The planning for nursery education is satisfactory. Staff use themes, such as 'mini beasts', and link activities to this theme. A table is set out with books, binoculars and magnifying glasses so that children can identify and discuss what they find in the garden. A walk to the park is planned so that the children can hunt for other insects and small creatures. However, the mini-beast theme is not extended further to increase children's learning by reading stories, making models or painting pictures related to the topic. Staff are starting to use the new plans, which have been devised with the help of the teacher advisor. They identify the children's learning needs and help staff to plan activities to meet these needs.

Children learn mainly through play. Staff sit with children to help them to extend their play, introduce them to new vocabulary and reinforce their knowledge. For example, when children are painting, the practitioner asks them what colour they make when they mix yellow and red together. While making sausages with the dough she asks them how many they have made. Children are confident and independent. Staff take opportunities to help them to learn colours, shape and numbers during play and through everyday activities, such as setting the table.

Children have opportunities to see writing and numbers in wall displays, and the areas for play are clearly labelled so that they become familiar with the written word and numerals. There is a mark-making table, but the range of writing materials is limited so that children do not have the opportunity to experiment.

Children enjoy looking at books in the book corner and they gather round the practitioner to listen to stories in small groups. They listen carefully and are interested and absorbed in the story. Staff help children to become confident communicators by talking to them, asking questions and introducing them to new words.

Staff provide opportunities for children to explore and investigate. They enjoy outings to the park, the zoo and other places of interest and staff talk to them about what is happening in the wider world. One member of staff talks to children about her forthcoming wedding and children bring in their own special outfits and excitedly show them to the staff and to their friends. They have fun exploring different textures and natural substances when they play with water, wet and dry sand, and dig in the garden. Children have limited use of technology because the computer is broken and there are few programmable toys.

There are opportunities for children to be creative. They have regular access to dough, paints and arts and crafts materials, such as glue, scissors, glitter and different coloured papers. Staff sit with the children to offer suggestions and children are encouraged to create their own pictures. Children also enjoy listening to music, singing rhymes and playing musical instruments.

Physical development is fostered well because children have regular opportunities to play outside in the well equipped play area. They climb, slide and balance on the large and interesting climbing frame, play ballgames and ride wheeled toys. Children enjoy running about in the fresh air and the staff also set out other equipment, such as a home corner and sand and water. Children practice their small motor skills when they paint, draw, manipulate dough and puzzles, and build using different kinds of construction.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are made welcome in the group and staff obtain information from parents so that they can meet their individual needs. Staff have received training in special educational needs and they consult with parents and other professionals when necessary to ensure that appropriate care is provided. The building is new and purpose built so that disabled access and toilets are available.

Some resources, such as dolls, puzzles, books and posters, are provided, which help children to learn about diversity and provide positive images of different cultures and religions, but there are few resources relating to disability or gender issues. Children learn concern for others when they are involved in activities to raise money for charities, such as Children in Need.

Children are well behaved and they respond to the kind and approachable staff who are good role models and speak to children politely and with respect. Children show concern for one another and they are encouraged to share, to take turns and to be helpful. Staff use praise appropriately to build children's self-esteem and help them to feel valued in the group. Their artwork is displayed around the playrooms and this increases their feelings of belonging in the setting. This positive approach helps to

foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership between parents and carers is satisfactory and they are provided with some information about the nursery. Parents state that they are extremely happy with the service provided and they feel that their children are well cared for and happy in the setting. Staff provide them with some information about the Birth to three matters framework and about the Foundation Stage curriculum, as posters relating to these topics are displayed outside of the playrooms together with the plans for activities. Parents of babies under one year old are given daily sheets, which contain information about feeds, nappy changes and sleeps. However, there is no written information about the daily activities or progress of the toddlers and pre-school children. Staff talk to parents each day to share information and they can ask to see their children's folders, which show how they are progressing in each area of development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are protected in the setting because staff ensure that they do not come into unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted. The recruitment and induction procedures for new staff help to verify that staff are suitable to work with children. All of the staff have a recognised early years qualification.

Since the last inspection the staff have attended several training courses to help them to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The manager has also enlisted the help of the early years development worker and teacher advisor who provide regular support and training to help staff to offer an improved learning environment for children. Staff are also in the process of developing their planning recording and evaluation systems.

The correct adult-child ratios are maintained to ensure that children have the appropriate level of support and supervision. The manager provides cover during lunch breaks so that there are always sufficient staff on duty.

The space and resources are satisfactorily organised to allow children freedom of movement and choice about what they do. The manager and staff have taken advice from the early years development worker and children now have access to a wide range of activities throughout the day. Areas of the playroom have been designated for different activities, such as mark-making, role play, arts and crafts, sand and water and the book corner.

Most of the necessary records, policies and procedures are in place for the efficient management of the provision and the welfare, care and learning of children. The children's records are stored in a locked cabinet in the office so that confidentiality is maintained.

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. There are regular staff meetings when planning and other relevant issues are discussed and the

manager is committed to improving the quality of care, teaching and learning in the nursery. Staff are encouraged to access all relevant training to help them to improve their knowledge and understanding of child care issues. Planning is used to provide a balanced and stimulating curriculum so that children make progress in all areas of development.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the safety of children has improved because systems have been put in place for the recruitment and induction of new staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Children's safety in the event of accident or illness has been improved because the administration of medication is recorded correctly and a fully stocked first aid box is available. The play and learning environment for children is more interesting and stimulating since staff have received training in the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum and they are working with the early years development worker to help them to plan and provide activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made by parents.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all toys and equipment are clean and hygienic

- continue to improve the outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the Birth to three matters framework
- continue to increase resources which provide positive images to reflect non-stereotypical roles, racial, cultural and religious diversity and disability.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop a knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum including planning and assessment, so that children are provided with a stimulating and balanced range of activities which meets their individual needs.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk